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# BANQUET

GIVEN TO

PROFESSOR JOSEPH LECONTE

BY THE

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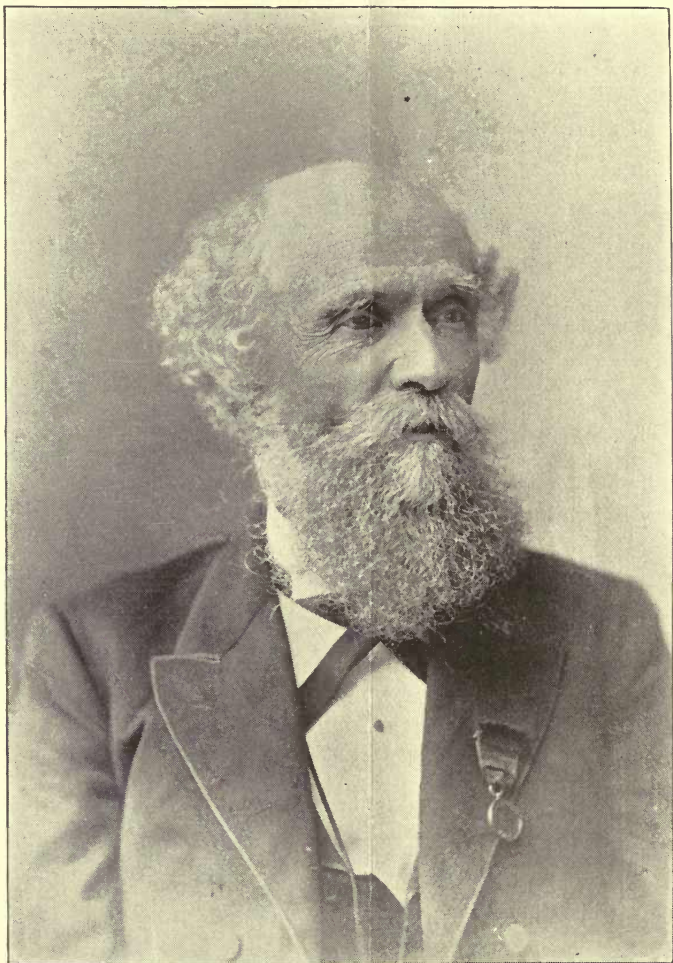
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA. University. Alum

September 24, 1892









JOSEPH LECONTE

Our honored and beloved guest  
"Professor Joe"

## PROCEEDINGS.

The Alumni Association of the University of California tendered to Professor JOSEPH LECONTE, on the occasion of his return from Europe, a banquet at the California Hotel, San Francisco, on Saturday evening, September 24, 1892.

To the music of "Hail to the Chief" the Alumni and their honored guest proceeded to the banquet-room where an excellent meal was partaken, after which the President of the Association, Mr. J. B. REINSTEIN, spoke as follows:

### *Fellow Graduates:*

For many years it has been the fashion for us of the West to turn like the Musselman toward the East, not only for the first rays of physical light, but also for the first glimmer of mental and moral advancement, and though this custom is now happily growing somewhat out of date, permit me to take from the Orient a sentence which crystallizes the religion of the Koran: "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet," and paraphrase it into something truer, more fitted to the history and status of our Alma Mater, and more appropriate to this gathering and its honored guest, and say, "There is but one University of California, and its prophet is Professor Joseph LeConte."

However we may differ as to the religion of the Koran or any religion, as to politics, purposes or pursuits, however divergent our views, our hopes, our aims, or our acts, there is one sentiment which finds a spontaneous, hearty and



ringing echo in the breast of every graduate here, and hosts who are not, who are yet with us in spirit and sympathy,—a rallying cry—now, and we hope for many years to come, there is but one University of the State of California, there is but one Professor Jos. LeConte.

Needless to dwell on the latter part of this statement. As truly as it was said of the greatest Roman of them all, we may say, "His life has been gentle and all the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world,—this is a man." His fame royal in the land beyond the seas, his name a household word with us, as revered as he is loved, by every person who has come within the wide range of his beneficent influence.

And as to the first part of the sentiment, if there be any doubt it rests with us to put it beyond that pale, and place it beyond the range of question.

Truer than the celebrated reply of Marshal Ney, that he himself was the rear guard of the Grand Army of Invasion, is the statement that the Alumni of the University of California constitute the University, and it is nothing more and nothing less than what its graduates make it. They are its sole product, they are its entire reason for existence, and if it were ever true that the tree is judged by its fruit, the University of California is measured and will be measured by the life work of its Alumni. Their labors, their standards, their hopes, aims, ambitions and acts shall give it dignity, prestige, renown, or the reverse. Without them, the splendid liberality of a glorious and sovereign state, the wisdom of its governing Board of Regents, the superb personnel of its Faculty, may strive for success, but in vain. It rests with us and with us alone, accepting the challenge of public opinion, and public expectation, based on all our advantages, to be worthy of our opportunities, equal to our



obligations and mindful of our high estate, and in this sense and with this view, let us take this sentiment, not as a boastful rallying cry, but as a stirring summons to duty and high resolve and lofty deed. A bugle call of *noblesse oblige*.

I give you the sentiment of the evening, and ask you to drink it standing: "There is but one University of California; there is but one Professor Joseph LeConte."

The President in calling upon the Hon. JOHN R. GLASCOCK for a response to the first half of the sentiment, gave as the toast, "The State of California's University," more shortly known as the University, and as its graduates feel even more truly termed, *the* University,—to which Mr. GLASCOCK responded as follows:

*Mr. President and Fellow Graduates:*

I have been requested to respond to the toast "the University of California." under a ten minutes limitation. Science has shown us that large bodies, under high pressure, can be reduced to smallest compass and yet preserve the elemental force and effectiveness of the original body; but by what process of mental hydraulics can our Alma Mater be reduced to the limits of a ten minutes talk, without the rankest kind of injustice to the grace and dignity of her fair proportions, the high order of her influence, the nobility of her mission?

There are those among us to-night who helped to rock the cradle of her infancy, who have watched her growth, the expansion of her powers and the maturing of all those qualities that go to make her a true priestess of learning, until to-day she stands before us the embodiment of cultured grace and strength—the exemplar, bar none, of western progress.

Once more we are gathered to hang our garlands about her altar while we do honor to him whose hair has whitened in the service of her high behests—the wisest, gentlest, strongest of those children of light, whose life has been the fulfillment of the injunction laid by the Great Master upon those who were to be as wise as the serpent, yet harmless as the dove.

Children, did I say? Yes, children of one mother, yet not children. Men and women rather, not a few of whose faces (of course I refer now to the men) begin to show furrows of thought and care, upon not a few of whose heads the silver hand of time has been laid, while from the mass of brown and black and yellow before me, now and then there rises like some sun-kissed cypress tree above the dull and stagnant waters of a southern swamp, in sharp contrast, a stately forehead, turned now, alas, always to the stars, whose presence brings with it the companionship of a lost youth, while consoling us in the realization of the falsity of the adage, “death loves a shining mark.”

I remember reading some where that an Indian sage, being asked by a disciple, what became of man after death, replied that the soul returned to Brahma, the voice to the winds, the blood to water and the body to earth. “But,” returned the disciple, “is there nothing that remains?” “Yes,” answered the sage, “the *deed* remains.” It was the voice of Deity speaking through the superstition of the past. The deed remains. High thought, lofty purpose, are as naught unless crystallized into the deed. The deed is what speaks. The question to be asked hereafter will not be what *might* you have done, but what have you *done*.

If it should be asked what remains of the personality of Henry Durant, how long would we who reverence his name



remain in doubt as to the answer? The mighty deed that he accomplished when he laid the foundation and planned the superstructure of the University of California.

Time will not permit a statement of details, nor allow more than a passing glimpse at the formative period of her existence. The sharp struggle for infant life, the hopes, fears, disappointments, anxieties, sorrows, rejoicings, defeats and victories that marked the various stages of her growth, are matters of University history known to all of us. We take her as she is, a mighty engine capable alike for good or evil, according to the manner in which she is handled, and the direction given to her manifold energies. She is the loom on which the threads of a world's knowledge are woven into the warp and woof of the personality of her products. The quality of the material turned out depends upon the perfection of the machinery employed, and the character of the raw material worked up. To insure perfection of machinery there must be no jarring nor clashing of its parts. It must work harmoniously as a whole, or wasted energy and distorted product will result. No university can succeed until all of its departmental ganglia connect with a common center, big enough and strong enough to control, regulate and harmonize its working forces. Until this shall happen University progress must of necessity be spasmodic, halting and ineffective. When it does occur University deeds will speak as with the tongues of angels.

We are the raw materials worked up by our University. As we reflect the character and quality of her teaching so she reflects the character and quality of our lives and deeds. I doubt if it ever occurs to us seriously that our Alma Mater will be judged by the deeds of her children. I fear that too often the only thought we give her is at our annual or other reunions when we chant her praises, recall the pleasant

memories of her gentle guidance through four short years of loving companionship, and pledge her periodically undying devotion. She does not need or want that sporadic fealty which is born of the wine cup amid the enthusiasm of a banquet, and which is too frequently epitomized in the college refrain,—“we won’t go there any more.” What she does need and want is full and constant return for the affection she has lavished upon us, a watchful protection of her rights and an exemplification in our lives of the worth and effectiveness of her instruction. She wants deeds from us, as men and women, that will reflect luster upon our Alma Mater.

We are the fruit of this tree, and our lives and deeds will be the measure of her standing at the bar of public opinion. Our deeds are her deeds, our disgrace, her disgrace, our glory, her glory.

The plane of intellectual brotherhood is broad enough to include all who strive earnestly for advancement. We may not, therefore, be taxed with treachery to our Alma Mater when we extend a hearty greeting to her younger sister who now so bravely fronts the steep with the star of hope shining on her brow. “All hail and welcome, Palo Alto! Room for another queen on the heights that overlook the mad hurry and turmoil of life! Not the least of the ties between is that of blood. Our association has its representation among the working forces of your institution. The soil is good, the harvest abundant. No other thought than that of generous emulation shall stir the harmony existing between us.”

Fellow Graduates, I need not tell you that it is necessary not only that we should not relax our vigilance over the interests of our Alma Mater; but that we should redouble our efforts in her behalf. I do not wish to be understood as meaning that she is likely to retrograde, nor to deny her good work and high standard of efficiency. She is do-



ing well, but should do better. There are other hills to surmount, other different and broader lines of educational policy to be mapped out, along which her course should rise and expand. These lines of policy should be shaped and their agencies controlled by those who love her best—her children. There is necessity, pressing necessity, for active, persistent and continuous effort on our part to promote the best interests of an institution that claims and should receive our reverence, love and whole-souled support.

When the children of Israel fleeing from Egyptian tyranny, halted at the sea, with the lights of Baal-Zephon gleaming in their faces across a waste of angry waters, while the chariots of Pharaoh thundered in their rear; when hideous confusion reigned supreme over a chaotic mass of trembling, frightened humanity; when, like hunted animals, they turned from the sea to the chariots and back to the sea again in vain hope of a refuge which was not; when the blackness of the darkness without was only equalled by the blackness of despair within; when life and death hung shaking in the balance, a voice came to the prophet, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward!" And in that voice was the preservation of an empire.

So now to you, men and women of the University of California, a voice comes, "Speak unto the University of California that she go forward." Speak through your hopes for educational progress, through your love for your Alma Mater. Speak through your *deeds*, and the University will move to the fulfillment of her high destiny.

Music: "Berkeley, Oh Berkeley!"

Mr. WARREN C. GREGORY of the Class of 1887 thereupon responded to the toast, "There is but one Professor Joseph LeConte. First in science, first in the Faculty, and first in the hearts of the Alumni."

*Mr. President:*

The sentiment you have given us: "First in the hearts of the alumni," tells the whole story:

For over twenty years the name LeConte has been so inseparably connected with that of the University that the mention of the one unconsciously suggests the other and every graduate realizes how very unnecessary it is for anyone of our number to speak of our guest to-night in terms of formal praise or eulogy. The hearty cheer, the spontaneous enthusiasm which greets every reference to his name, speaks of the deep affection and love we bear him, far more emphatically than can any words of mine.

Fellow Graduates, we have met to-night to again be with our beloved professor. We welcome him not only as the learned man and distinguished teacher, but also as the *companion* of our student life. We have come to once more feel the great charm and influence of a personality which always seems to have caught some of "Nature's genial glow", an influence, silent indeed, but as potent as any we have known towards lifting us to loftier ideals of the good and true.

Many of our number have by reason of the cares and duties of business life been unable to keep fully in touch with Berkeley life or Berkeley doings. Her Faculty shows many changes in its personnel since we were there and has many faces new to most of us. But let us rejoice to assure our guest that he is no stranger to any here, that



from the inception of the college to the present day no son or daughter has left the halls of our Alma Mater to whom his face is not a "familiar and a friend." And let us assure him also that we still desire to be enrolled among his constituency, a constituency which does not waver or falter, but which grows in numbers and in strength as the years go by, a following which will ever hold him in grateful and loving remembrance.

Of his services to the University, and to the cause of education at large, it is idle for me to speak. We can every one of us testify to the one, from pleasant recollections of the lecture-room in old South Hall, and the learned men and societies of the world bear grateful tribute to the other.

But there is one particular in which the professor is not infallible. He has long claimed that he is a Southerner and not more than a year or so ago endeavored to further test our credulity by describing his native Southern home "revisited." For aught I know he may now claim to be an Englishman, indeed I have it on reliable authority that while in England he was seen promenading Rotten Row with the rest of the nobility, adorned with one of those high silk tiles so dear to the heart of every Britisher. But *we* know when he thus claims Georgia or a foreign land as his native heath that he is simply attempting one of his little jokes. We know that he is and always has been a Californian, a pioneer. Of this he stands self-convicted for he has taken away from us exclusive ownership in our great mountains and rivers, our Sierras and Sequoias, and made them the common property of all men. And in unguarded moments too he has spoken of "our" rocks and "our" trees. Can he now throw off his allegiance and say that he is not as they are "native here and to the manor born"?

When I was an undergraduate it was said that Professor LeConte had never taken a vacation. This it would be hard to make those believe who have had the good fortune to read his rough notes on mountain climbing and with them have followed him in his explorations over our Sierras with his body-guard of students. But these short expeditions were always taken as much for research and investigation as for recreation and the world was sure to be reminded of them afterwards by some new discovery in the natural wonders of our State. A year ago, however, he consented to take a much needed rest in foreign lands. Thither we followed him, there in fancy we have heard him addressing this or that gathering of scientific men with the voice and accent so familiar to us, delighting all with those qualities of mind and heart we so much admire. But the Regents finally determined they must have him back even if they had to raise his salary and now we find him again at his well-known post, renewed, we trust, in health and strength.

Speaking of those rough mountain notes doubtless many will recall his fierce description of himself on starting out and the rough attire and broad brim hat from which, as he said, his little son shrank as did Hector's baby boy shrink from the nodding plume of his warlike sire. But he cannot make that boast now, for the governing board of our college have concluded that this same little son would himself make a good warrior and now we have another Joseph LeConte enlisted in the ranks of University teachers. That he may follow the example his father has set for him and that the voices of generations of students may continue to ring the name through Berkeley corridors as heartily as do those of to-day, is our most earnest hope and desire.



And this brings me to another very pleasant theme, the LeConte Memorial Scholarship Fund. With its origin and purpose you are already familiar. It is now my happy privilege to announce its completion. With the money already secured and that subscribed, the fund has reached its projected limit. That it also may bear fruit worthy of its name is all we ask of it.

And now, Professor, in behalf of your former pupils, as well those who are distant from us to-night as those who are gathered round this board, I extend to you a most cordial welcome home.

Music: "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," which the graduates sang with hearty and rousing feeling.

A letter of thanks was then read from JOSEPH N. LECONTE ("Little Joe"), the first beneficiary of the LeConte Scholarship Fund, thanking the Alumni Association for the benefits he had derived from the fund.

Thereupon the President said: "*Fellow Graduates:*" Upon the wall hangs a crayon picture of our beloved Professor, a perfect likeness of him, draped with the blue and gold colors of that University with which so much of his life's work has been entwined. On the ribbon knot which ties the wreath drawn around the head are printed the words "honesty, industry, sincerity," the three great motives he has been wont to consider as shaping his splendid efforts. The drawing is a gift to our beloved Professor from the Alumni Association, loaded down with the heartfelt best wishes of every graduate of

our University. Upon the left at the base of the picture is a miniature picture of Dr. John LeConte, and on the right a poem written by Mrs. E. J. McHENRY, entitled "Professor Joe," the words of which we will now listen to from the lips of Mrs. WILLIAM KEITH, daughter of the author."

"PROFESSOR JOE."

'Tis "Professors John and Joe" no more,  
Only "Professor Joe,"  
With his hair a little whiter  
And his step a little slow;  
But we love him all the better,  
And we cannot let him go,  
No matter who may want him,  
Our own "Professor Joe."

The brother who is resting  
Could tell us of the bound  
Of the forces of great Nature,  
Of light, and heat, and sound;  
But "Professor Joe" must tell us  
How well two things agree,  
The growing Light of Science  
And Immortality.

Then may he tarry with us,  
Long ere he has to go;  
For this would not seem Berkeley  
Without "Professor Joe."

Professor JOSEPH LECONTE thereupon rose and with much feeling, and in his own dear way, said: *Mr. President, Graduates of the University, My Friends, My Pupils, My Boys and My Girls :*

You know that when you were under my tuition I never called you boys and girls; I never call students so. I don't like to hear them call one another so. They are already far too boyish. There is far too much of the rudeness, the brutality, thoughtless cruelty, characteristic of all young persons. I wish to cultivate in them the sense of manhood and womanhood. But *now* that there is no longer any uncertainty as to your position as men and women; now that some of you are already touched lightly with untimely frosts; now that there is no longer any law of restraint between us but only perfect freedom to express our innermost heart—now I yearn to call you my boys, my girls.

You think I have done you some good, and you have taken this graceful way of acknowledging it. I hope I have, but do not for a moment imagine that you have not given me as much as you have received. You remember that your old Professor of Physics—Dr. John—taught you that “action is equal to reaction, and in opposite directions.” Now I say that what is true in Physics is also true in Psychics; what is true in the world of matter is also true in the world of spirit. In all that is best in teaching, in the formation of character, in quickening mental activity, in kindling enthusiasm, and in inspiring with the love of Truth, it is always fair exchange, a giving and taking, between teacher and pupil. We old fellows are apt to think that we alone teach, but action is equal and only equal to reaction. We teach only if, and only in proportion as, we are taught. The same is true even in the case of children. We parents think we teach our children but we little think how much our



children, even our babies, teach us. It seems to me that my children have taught me even more than I have ever taught them. But I suppose I am mistaken; I suppose that reaction is only equal to action. I shall not stop here to discuss the many applications of this principle, especially the mutual and helpful relations of all classes in a healthy progressive society, but I cannot help saying to you young men and women that the most powerful educational institution in the world is the *family*, and not only for the education of children, but also of grown-up people.

But I am digressing—I come back. I was trying to tell you how much you have done for me in promoting my intellectual growth. How? you ask. I will tell you. It is a fact that nearly every good thought I ever had was born in my mind during immediate preparation for my class lecture. You know my habit: how for two hours before going into my class-room I pace the floor, or else sit with eyes shut and thumbs on my ears, in intense thought—my class in imagination before me, and I talking to them. I thus go over the lecture at least twice, even though the subject may be perfectly familiar to me. In this way I arouse afresh my interest even to the point of enthusiasm. As warmth and concealment are necessary for the germination of seed, so the heat of preparation and the retirement of my study—yet with the class present in imagination—is necessary for the germination of the best seed-thoughts. But more than this: nearly everything that I ever wrote, whether of books or articles, was first given in outline, or in the form of suggestions, to my classes.

There has been much talk recently about endowment of research. I entirely sympathise with the movement. There can hardly be too much of it. Any government or any institution honors itself by liberally endowing research. But

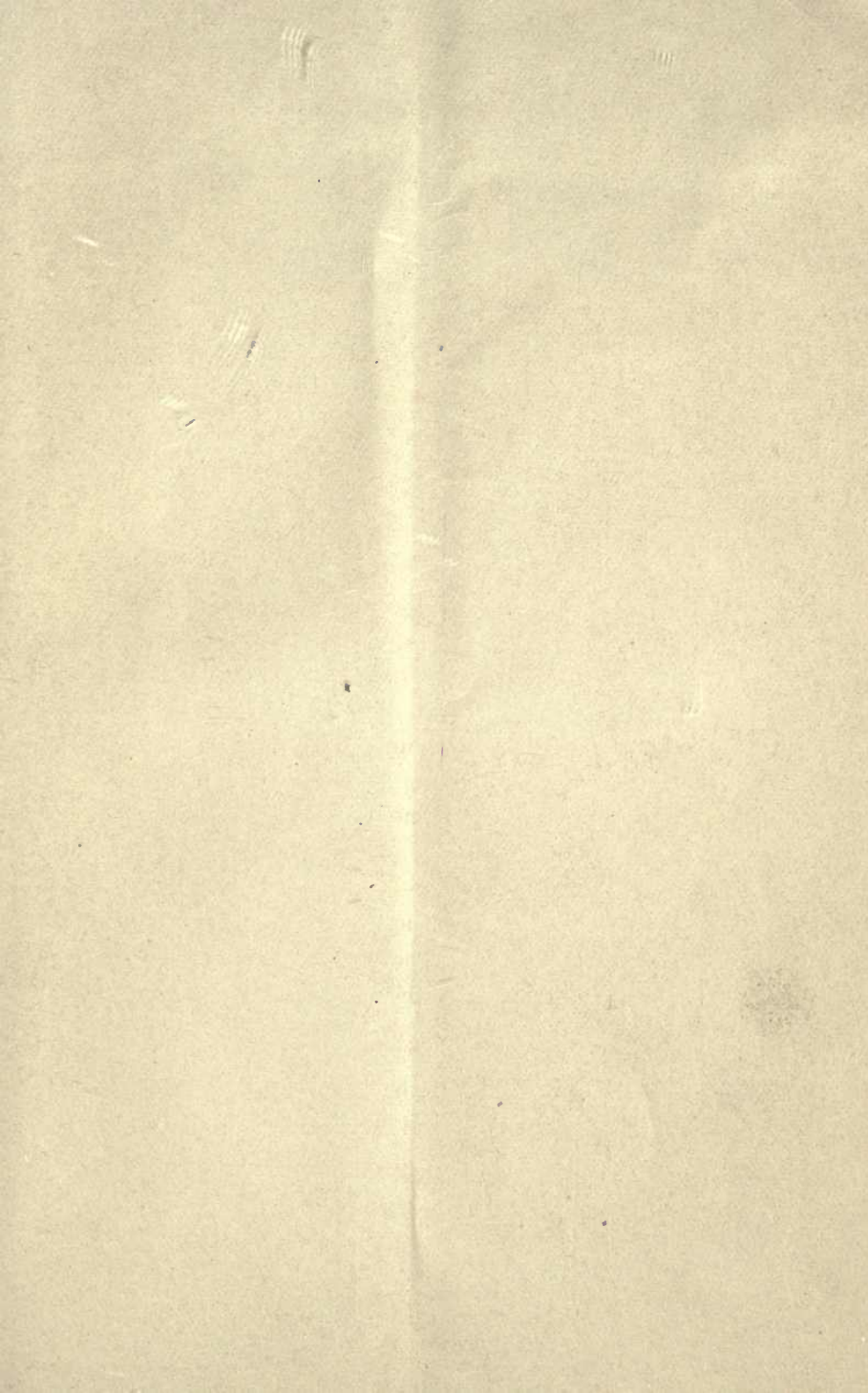
when we go farther, as some do, and talk about divorcing research from teaching, in accordance with a supposed universal law of differentiation of human pursuits or division of labor, then we make a fatal mistake. What the laws of nature and of the human spirit (which are the laws of God) have joined together, let no man put asunder. The teacher is all the better teacher for being an investigator. All, I suppose, will admit that. But, also, the investigator is all the better investigator for being a teacher, only he must not be burdened with teaching to the extent of leaving no time for investigation. Nothing so clears, systematizes, organizes, our own thoughts as does the honest, earnest attempt to make them clear to others.

Now, I have been trying to show you that the obligations between us are mutual and equal; but you seem to think that they are all on your side, and you are trying to get even, but not so; we were already even before, and you now destroy the balance by the honors you do me and the pleasant things you have said about me. What shall I do and say to restore the equilibrium? If I had only *known* all the pleasant and flattering things that would be said I might hope to reply suitably. I might give as good as I got. But alas! I am not one of those nimble-witted spirits who, like Bottom, the Weaver, can play any part alike off-hand, whether it be the Lover's part or the Lion's part, or "a part to tear a cat in, and make all split." No; I am like Snug, the Joiner, "I am slow of study." Even if it be only the Lion's part, which indeed you seem determined to force on me—even if it be only the Lion's part, therefore, nothing but *roaring*, I would have it written so that I might con it, otherwise I might "roar too terribly, and that would fright the ladies." But there are some things which I can say off-hand, and now proceed to say them.

Since I saw you last I have wandered far and seen many peoples of many races and tongues. I have admired each for some distinctive quality in which it excelled all others, but I have come back to my own country and my own State, well satisfied that if our civilization is more crude and lower *in development*; it is more complex in its elements, and therefore higher *in its type*. I have visited many of the foremost universities of Europe and in the eastern part of our own country and have admired each for some peculiar excellence, but I have come back to our own better satisfied and more hopeful than ever. Not but that there is much, very much, room for improvement, but it must be improvement by growth and development, not by essential change. She is on the right track; let her go on. The evidence of this is before me in this assembly of her graduates. I have attended many commencements of our best universities in the East, not only during this absence but on previous occasions. I have conversed with many alumni of many universities, both in Europe and this country, and I come back to you. Now I am not going to flatter you, you need not expect it, but I can say with truth, that I am not ashamed of our own graduates in comparison. Is it not something to be proud of? To have been at the birth—to have been one of the founders of such a university, and one of the intellectual fathers of such a brood of sons and daughters as I see before me to-night? I reckon it as the chiefest glory of my life.

The audience then sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" and "Auld Lang Syne," after which there was a general hand-shaking with the Professor and reception, closing a delightful and most satisfactory gathering.





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